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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 USNATO 000596

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TAGS: PREL NATO PGOV EUN MARR AF PINS
SUBJECT: WAY FORWARD ON SUPPORTING EUPOL EXPANSION

REF: A. BRUSSELS 1684 (NOTAL)
1B. KABUL 3557
1C. BRUSSELS 1505
1D. BRUSSELS 1566

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires John Heffern for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) SUMMARY: We believe there may be an opportunity to enhance ISAF support for the EU Police Mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL). Turkey and EU officials have indicated privately that they might be open to engaging on such an initiative. Unless instructed otherwise, USNATO intends to work informally to try to find a formula that would gain consensus support at NATO and be acceptable to the EU. We understand the EU may have insufficient personnel to deploy to U.S. Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) due to force generation problems but should the EU resolve these difficulties, such a potential deployment could have broader positive effects for our efforts in Afghanistan and NATO-EU relations in general. END SUMMARY.

Way Forward on EUPOL Expansion

12. (C) USNATO endorses Embassy Kabul's views regarding the utility of facilitating EUPOL expansion into RC-E and appreciates its concern to find a way forward that preserves our standing NATO default policy (reftel B). We note as well that, as NATO has moved into aspects of police training and towards a Comprehensive Approach to the effort in Afghanistan, both NATO and the EU stand to gain from formalizing their working relationship. Allied Chief of Plans Brigadier General Porter on November 18 told Allies and non-NATO ISAF contributors of the need to maximize unity of effort and transparency between NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A), the European Gendermarie Force, and EUPOL to ensure that the training effort for the Afghan National Police has the right level of expertise operating in a coherent, synchronized manner. For these reasons, we believe it would be preferable to take another shot at enhancing ISAF-EUPOL cooperation and support.

Positive Trajectory to NATO-EU Cooperation in Afghanistan

13. (C) The previous effort in 2007 to secure a formal NATO-EU

agreement for ISAF support to EUPOL failed. At that time, the EU sent letters to the SYG, SACEUR, and COMISAF requesting extensive support from NATO in the areas of force protection, food and accommodation, logistics, airlift, medical treatment, medical evacuation, information sharing, in extremis support, and incorporation into NATO's blue-force tracker system to facilitate in extremis support. NATO agreed informally to provide in extremis support based on ISAF's agreed operations plan, but the NAC was otherwise unable to consider the requests officially due to disagreements concerning the use of existing NATO-EU Berlin Plus arrangements. As a result, NATO has not formally responded to the EU request.

¶4. (C) We note a positive trend on NATO-EU cooperation since 2007, however, that gives rise for some optimism. Beyond the informal agreement on the provision of in extremis support, ISAF and EUPOL are working well together on the ground, although ISAF commanders say having political cover would enhance the possibilities for cooperation.

¶5. (C) Work also has proceeded quietly under the management of DSACEUR--who wears both NATO and EU hats--on the EU's request for inclusion into NATO's blue-force tracker system. NATO Private Office Deputy Director Bertolotti told us recently that NATO is now ready to honor the request once the EU procures the necessary equipment to participate.

¶6. (C) Likewise, the Private Office, with U.S. assistance, was able to mediate with Turkey and the EU for ISAF to provide in extremis and medical evacuation support to the EU

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Election Observer Mission in August 2009. The key to success in these cases was that discussions were handled quietly, and no one did anything to create unpleasant surprises.

Opportunity for ISAF Support

¶7. (C) We believe there may now be an opportunity to enhance ISAF-EUPOL cooperation in Afghanistan that would enable EUPOL's eventual deployment to RC-E and have broader, positive effects for our efforts in Afghanistan and NATO-EU relations in general. NATO SYG Rasmussen on November 16 told EU counterparts at the EU General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) that EUPOL and ISAF should have a more direct relationship. The Swedes and other EU member states have been supportive as well. We advised that it would be best to work on this collectively, focusing on how to engage Turkey informally in order to enable a constructive political dialogue. In recent weeks, we have begun a private dialogue with Turkish counterparts on the possibility of facilitating such ISAF-EUPOL cooperation. EU officials involved with the EUPOL mission have likewise indicated a willingness to work informally to enhance cooperation.

¶8. (C) Rather than reiterating a formal EU request at this time, there may be an opportunity to develop ISAF-EUPOL cooperation in conjunction with broader ISAF support to international civilian organizations, provided pursuant to ISAF's Operations Plan (OPLAN). Security events such as the recent attack on the UNAMA guest house could provide the basis for an ISAF response that would use existing NATO documents and procedures to provide support to the UN, EU, NGOs and other international entities operating in Afghanistan. Such an arrangement could include ISAF-EUPOL cooperation.

¶9. (C) Finding acceptable language will take time but we believe that there is no rush. We understand the EU would be unable to fulfill a formal arrangement with the U.S. to deploy into RC-E due to significant problems with force generation for the 400-person EUPOL. There would be little utility in making such an agreement with the EU until member

states demonstrate they will actually be able to deploy the personnel.

Comment

¶110. (C) Unless instructed otherwise, USNATO intends to attempt to facilitate an arrangement that would allow ISAF-EUPOL cooperation. We would pursue this by working informally first to see if we can find a formula that would be acceptable to both organizations. Should the effort fail and the EU decide it will go forward with a deployment into RC-E, we should consider moving forward with a bilateral U.S.-EU agreement at the operational level to provide the necessary support to facilitate EUPOL deployment to U.S. PRTs. However, we should make explicit to the EU that this would be an exception to our NATO default policy and not a new rule or precedent. Further, we should not pursue a bilateral agreement until the EU has come up with the personnel to staff the mission and is ready to deploy.

HEFFERN